

his story has all the coherence that comes from a strong and living conception of the character of the hero. The subordinate actors duly play their parts, though Mrs. Felix Lorraine is somewhat of an enigma, and is evidently beyond the powers of a boy of twenty-one. The style is light and vivacious, full of sparkle and epigram ; and, though faults of taste are numerous, this first volume on the whole is a most amusing blend of cleverness and impudence. Even the flippancy and cynicism are too obviously boyish affectations to cause real offence. If we remember that *Vivian Grey* is only a work of fiction, and a work of fiction with a large element of caricature and exaggeration, and if we make allowance also for that subtle Disraelian irony which pervades all the novels, we may fairly say that in the first volume the hero is Disraeli himself; though just for that reason the work ought to have remained a fragment, as without a further development of the author's personality the story of the hero's adventures could not be carried on in conformity with the original conception.

The second volume opens with the mission to Wales, which bears so close a resemblance in detail to Disraeli's own mission to Scotland that it could hardly have been written except in the light of that experience ; but signs of haste and discord at once begin to be apparent, and the remainder of the novel is a continuous descent. Both the story and the characters become incoherent, whole chapters of irrelevant padding are introduced, and the author's main preoccupation now appears to be to stretch his story out to a fairly respectable length and then with the least possible trouble in the development of the plot to bring it to some sort of conclusion. Presently we lapse into vulgar and hideous melodrama. Mrs. Felix Lorraine, who before was an enigma, now becomes a monster, and, monster as she is, the hero in his revenge upon her shows himself a fiend. 'As hot and hurried a sketch as ever yet was penned,' is Disraeli's own description of the first part of the novel in his